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Essential Belief Statement

Dr. Grace

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To put it simply, I was raised by a community of educators. My father has been teaching at my old high school, which happens to be both a day and boarding school, for 30 years. This means that I spent the first eighteen years of my life immersed in a world where students, teachers and their families lived, ate, learned, and played together on a daily basis. In my early years, I ran around the school’s campus with the other teachers’ children, commonly known as “faculty brats,” while our parents attended after-school meetings, supervised the dormitories, and, in my father’s case, announced athletic events. To me, school wasn’t just a place where people went for 8 hours a day and then went home; it was more than that. It was a lifestyle, it *was* home. Thus, before I even reached high school myself, I saw it from the inside-out. I witnessed the daily struggles of my father and his colleagues (the difficult students, the low salary, the ugly politics), but I also witnessed the impacts teachers made on their students and the lasting connections they shared with them. And, when I graduated, I realized that my teachers had become my family; they had literally watched and helped me grow up. Perhaps this is why, after completing almost two years of college, I changed my major to education. To me, striving to become like the people who raised and inspired me feels like going home.

I think the fact that I was raised in a high school setting played a great role in ushering my decision to become a secondary education teacher. I also feel that the majority of my “growing up” happened while I was actually *enrolled* in high school, therefore making it a pivotal phase of my life. As humans we never stop changing, but I believe that a vast majority of our change happens within those four years, and this fascinates me. I would love to learn from the changes that my future students experience, and to help them through the very journey that played such a key role in determining who I am today. Furthermore, there are so many bright, unique minds out there that have the potential to keep me inspired throughout my lifetime, and this is where my love for English comes into play. Not only was English my favorite subject throughout all my schooling, it is also a subject that allows for creativity, growth, and emotion.

I am a “clipboard” learner, but I am also a “puppy.” For this reason, I will provide structure and organization in my classroom and do my absolute best to foster a safe, respectful learning environment much like the one I was raised in. I will also be aware that all students learn differently and that many students prefer multiple ways of learning and mastering subject matter. I will do my best to implement a variety of methods and approaches to meet the needs of my students.

I am hoping that this CIA course will help to ease my mind of the fears that I have regarding my future profession. First and foremost, I hope to learn how to gain the trust and respect of my students, as I am afraid that they will not accept me, although I understand that it takes time to establish rapport. I am also afraid of being unable to teach to their individualized needs, so I hope that this course will provide me with the skills necessary to allow many unique individuals—my future students—to grow, learn, and succeed to the best of their abilities.